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AIR POUCH  
 PRIORITY

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM

AMEMBASSY, MADRID

811  
DESP. NO.

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

May 1, 1953  
DATE

REF

Department's Circular Airgram, April 27, 1951

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SUBJECT:

JOINT WEEKA No. 18 from SANA, Section I:  
 POLITICAL AND MILITARY

POLITICAL

UNCLASSIFIED -- FRANCO ENDS TOUR OF ANDALUCIA

Detailed coverage of the activities of the Chief of State in Andalucia continued to be first duty of the Madrid press throughout the week. From Sevilla, FRANCO continued to visit irrigation and housing projects and factories until April 29. The Cabinet met in Sevilla on April 25. On the same day the Vice President of Panama decorated the Caudillo with the Cross of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa in a ceremony marked by mutual expressions of cultural affinity, admiration and affection. On April 26 the Board of Governors of the University of Sevilla asked the Caudillo to accept an honoris causa degree. Franco suggested that the degree be conferred at the inauguration ceremony of the new university site.

On April 29, the Caudillo moved to Cordoba for the fifth centenary celebration of the birth of Gonzalo FERNANDEZ de CORDOBA, the Gran Capitán, and for a series of visits similar to those made in Sevilla.

At the centenary celebrations in Cordoba, Franco made a speech that repeated the theme of preceding speeches by the Mayor of Cordoba and the Minister of the Army: The XV Century unification of Spain, achieved by the Gran Capitán, has been repeated in our time by the Caudillo.

Other speeches of Franco in Andalucia have emphasized regime efforts to achieve "social justice". Other leaders "have exploited your legitimate yearning and thirst for justice . . ." but "we did not fight in order to serve the rich and powerful but rather to give you the justice you desired for a great Spain,

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a free Spain, and a just Spain".

The Chief of State returned to Madrid on April 30.

UNCLASSIFIED - SPANISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S PRESS STATEMENT  
ON SIGNIFICANCE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH U. S.

In an interview granted Mr. Brian CONNELL, special correspondent of the London News Chronicle, and widely reproduced in the Spanish press on April 26, Sr. MARTIN ARTAJO announced that negotiations between Spain and the United States for a defensive alliance "are on the eve of an agreement satisfactory to both parties which may perhaps be signed before the summer". Underlining the "delicacy of these negotiations, which, nevertheless have been resolutely pursued", the Spanish Foreign Minister declared that the projected agreement with the U.S., together with "our well-tested Iberian Pact with Portugal", would constitute the basis of Spain's cooperation in Western defense. Although prepared fully to play its role in such defense, Sr. Artajo said that Spain did not consider NATO membership necessary to this end. In defending the values of western civilization "taken as a whole", Spain regarded itself as "a bulwark and not as a last line of defense". In concluding the interview, the Spanish Foreign Minister expressed extreme scepticism regarding the Soviets' recent so-called "peace offensive" which, he stated, would not in any way alter Spain's relations with the outside world.

Comment: (Confidential) In a subsequent call on the Ambassador, Mr. Connell disclosed that Sr. Artajo's original prognostication as to when the agreements with the U. S. might be signed had been "within a month". In submitting his copy to the Minister for approval, however, the latter modified his prediction to read, more cautiously, "before the summer".

Sr. Artajo's express statement to the effect that Spain considers itself "a bulwark and not a last line of defense" is noteworthy and welcome since the Spaniards have heretofore given very little, if any, public indication that they were interested in anything beyond the defense of their own borders.

RESTRICTED - ALTERCATION BETWEEN ARRIBA AND LONDON  
NEWS CHRONICLE ON RECIPROCAL SPANISH - U. K.  
NEWS COVERAGE

The April 29 Arriba took the London News Chronicle

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specifically, and the British press in general, sharply to task for biased and truncated coverage of news about Spain. The peg on which Arriba hung this attack was a despatch from Brian Connell, reportedly published in the April 20 News Chronicle claiming, among other things, that the Spanish press, in compliance with governmental instructions, had systematically suppressed all mention of the forthcoming Coronation in England. "This calls above all for a prior admonition to Mr. Connell", Arriba declared, "for the Spanish press is a sovereign press which is carrying out its mission in a sovereign country. It is the sovereign will of the Spanish press which evaluates, with complete liberty, the information which it receives from the entire world, including British sources such as Reuters. It is the sovereign will of the Spanish press which, in accordance with the dictates of professional ethics . . . determines the place which each news item shall occupy in keeping with its importance for Spaniards . . . Without doing violence to the truth, Mr. Connell cannot assert that the Spanish press conceals news of Great Britain from the public". Pursuing its diatribe, Arriba affirmed that the Spanish press customarily accorded British news "at least 2000 words for each word of Spanish news carried by the English press". For example, "the British newspapers, these last few days, have maintained absolute silence about the extremely important trip of His Excellency, the Chief of the Spanish State, to Andalusia . . . It is difficult to find in the English newspapers a faithful reflection of our objective reality, of our positive accomplishments or of our direct or indirect contribution to the salvation of the Western World". After painting a glowing picture of the liberty to seek information enjoyed by the foreign journalist in Spain, Arriba wound up its editorial by reaffirming that the Spanish press "voluntarily maintains a line of conduct faithful to the higher interests of the Motherland and to its mission of disseminating information".

Comment: (Confidential) Following these heated protestations of objectivity and free choice of subject matter, it will be interesting to see to what extent the Spanish press is now permitted, not merely to mention, but to cover the British Coronation. On the other hand, Connell's article will unfortunately not serve to alleviate the already acrimonious and disparaging tone of most Spanish newspaper comment on British affairs.

#### RESTRICTED - COMMEMORATIVE MASS IN MADRID FOR MUSSOLINI

Following a small, black-bordered announcement which

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appeared only in Arriba on Sunday, April 26, a commemorative mass was held in Madrid on April 28th, "for the eternal repose of the soul of Benito Mussolini and for that of all the fallen Italians". This service took place in the "Basilica de la Milagrosa", a prosperous, good-sized church, located in one of the better residential quarters of Madrid (Calle Garcia de Paredes). The 200 to 250 people who attended included many members of the Italian colony, a sprinkling of Germans, four or five Spanish Army Officers, a First Secretary of the Colombian Embassy, the Director General of the Spanish Radio broadcasting system, and a retired Italian Army general.

Comment: (Confidential) It is the Embassy's understanding that the spiritus animator of this ceremony was Giambattista BERNARDIS, Madrid representative of the Italian neo-fascist MSI, who was also present at the service. The ex-Italian Army Officer who attended was General Gastone GAMBARA. He is a last-ditch Fascist, MSI member, former staff Colonel with the Italian forces on the Nationalist side during the Spanish Civil War, and briefly Italian Ambassador to Spain (1939-40). The General was tried as a war criminal by the Allies in 1946, but exonerated, and has been living in Spain since 1947. The Colombian diplomat was Sr. Eduardo CARRANZA, Press Attaché of the Embassy, an eccentric, heavy-drinking, undependable character of d'Annunzian affections (he is a versifier of dubious talent) and with a penchant for the more extreme brand of Hispanidad. The principal Spanish official present was Sr. Jesus SUEVOS Fernandez. Director General of Radio broadcasting since July 1951, Suevos is a long-time and ardent Falangist (founder of the Movement in Galicia) and has an unsavory reputation for being strongly Germanophile, anti-Semitic and anti-U.S.

#### ARMY

#### CONFIDENTIAL - U. S. LAND MINE PURCHASER IN MADRID

The American firm Lowe, Shaw and Company is attempting to arrange contracts with the governmental purchasing agency SCDIM (Servicio Comercial de Industrias Militares) for the purchase of land mines in Spain. Colonel Robert LOWE, an alleged retired Army officer (no record in official Army Register) is in Madrid negotiating with the military.

Comment: Lowe claims to have a direct line to NATO, says

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mines are destined for NATO, and offers to provide any or all materials for the manufacture of the mines.

RESTRICTED - VISITS BETWEEN AMBASSADOR AND  
LT. GENERAL MARTIN ALONSO

On April 23 the Ambassador paid a courtesy call on Lt. General Pablo MARTIN ALONSO, Captain General of the 1st Military Region (Madrid). The Captain General expressed admiration for President EISENHOWER and U. S. military power. He stated that while Spain was not lacking in spirit and enthusiasm, it was lacking in all types of equipment for modern combat, due to its poor economy.

On April 24 the Captain General repaid the visit, referred indirectly to the present negotiations, and expressed the hope that the "mutual admiration" which exists between both armies and countries would be crowned with success.

RESTRICTED - SPANISH ARMY OFFICERS TO ATTEND FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

At the present time the Central (Army) General Staff is studying a project to send Spanish Army Officers to universities in the U. S., France and the U. K. to perfect their knowledge of the English and French languages. This project was initiated to give prospective students at U. S., French and U. K. Army Schools at least three months of language instruction prior to reporting to their respective schools. Prospective students must have sufficient knowledge of the language concerned in order to absorb advanced instruction.

UNCLASSIFIED - MILITARY PARADE IN HONOR OF PORTUGUESE PRESIDENT

The President of Portugal, General Francisco CRAVEIRO Lopes, is expected to make an official visit to Madrid on May 14 or 15. In honor of the visitor, the Armed Forces will put on a parade. Apparently only Army units of the 1st Military Region (Madrid) will participate. (Weeka Mar 13).

RESTRICTED - HEALTH OF GENERAL OFFICERS

Lt. General Fernando BARROO Ortiz, President of the Supreme

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Council of Military Justice, and Major General Arsenio MARTINEZ de CAMPOS y de la Viesca (Duque de Seo de Urgel), Deputy Chief of the High General Staff, are both very ill and are not expected to live very long. General Barron has been ill for some time following an operation for cancer of the throat. (Weeka Jan 30).

UNCLASSIFIED - PROPOSED TOLL ROAD THROUGH GUADARRAMA

The Madrid press of April 24 - 25 carried extensive articles purporting to show the economic feasibility of a proposed privately financed toll-road tunnel through the Sierra de Guadarrama Mountains near Madrid on the highway to La Coruña. The tunnel would substitute 2.9 km of tunnel plus 2.7 km of new approach road for the present 9 kilometer stretch of road. Figures were said to indicate that the average of 520 vehicles which use the road daily, if they paid toll equal to the cost of fuel saved, would produce an annual revenue of 2,450,000 pesetas. The implication was that this constituted an attractive financial venture.

Comment: (Confidential) The legal basis for privately constructed toll roads was provided by the Cortes in February (Weeka Feb 27). The cost estimate of the proposed tunnel is 70,000,000 pesetas. With 2,400,000 pesetas annual revenue, it would require 29 years to pay for the basic construction costs, less interest, operating and maintenance costs, and profit. More realistic figures place this period at 50 years. Although the Spanish Directorate of Highways did not issue this press publicity, and decries it, the Directorate does believe in the potentialities of the private toll-road idea for Spain. It is not anticipated that private capital will be interested in the tunnel project.

UNCLASSIFIED - GENERAL SANCHEZ APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVE AT IRAK CORONATION

Lt. General Juan Bautista SANCHEZ González, Captain General of the 4th Military Region and Commanding General, IV Corps "Urgel" (Hq: Barcelona), has been appointed by the Cortes Ambassador Extraordinary for the coronation of King Faisal II of Irak. He arrived in Baghdad on April 20.

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UNCLASSIFIED - ARMY COLONEL NAMED CHIEF OF POLICE IN BARCELONA

Colonel Fernando VIVES Camino, Judge Advocate General's Corps, has been named Chief of Police of Barcelona.

NAVY

UNCLASSIFIED - FRENCH SUBMARINE REPORTED MAKING CIRCUIT OF PENINSULA

"Diario de Barcelona" reports that the French submarine Rolland Morillot, equipped with schnorkel, departed from the French Atlantic port of Lorient on April 13 to undertake a circuit of the Iberian Peninsula submerged. She is said to have passed safely through the Straits of Gibraltar and to have passed Barcelona enroute to Toulon, where the three-week voyage will end. Purpose is to test the effects of long periods of submerged navigation on the crew.

Comment: (Restricted) The newspaper's source of this information is not known. It may be that the reporter had information on the date of departure and is guessing at the day-to-day location of the vessel on the assumption that all is going well.

UNCLASSIFIED - DUTCH CRUISER VISITS EL FERROL

The Dutch cruiser Tromp visited El Ferrol from April 24 to April 26. According to Spanish press reports she is making a training cruise with 36 midshipmen aboard.

UNCLASSIFIED - SPANISH TRAINING SHIP TO VISIT NEW YORK

The Spanish training ship, Juan Sebastian Elcano, will arrive at Ciudad Trujillo, Dominican Republic, on May 4 and depart May 8. She will then proceed to New York, arriving on May 23 for an eight-day visit.

Comment: This visit to New York will be the first by a vessel of the Spanish Navy to that port since the Spanish Civil War. In 1951 the Elcano visited Philadelphia and Norfolk.

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AIR FORCE

UNCLASSIFIED - FRANCO'S VISIT TO CASA

Widespread publicity was given to Franco's recent visit to the Casa Aircraft Plant (Construcciones Aeronauticas S.A.) on the outskirts of Sevilla. Franco inspected the plant site and looked at the finished aircraft prototypes Alcotan 201 and the Halcon 202. He also looked at parts presently being manufactured for the utility model 207 and at plans for the four engine model 208. Later, three Heinkel 111 aircraft, built by CASA under license, gave a short flying exhibition.

New accounts further reflected considerable praise and self-satisfaction regarding the fact that Spain had constructed all of these aircraft by using only Spanish materiel.

Comment: (Restricted) Despite the fact that the Alcotan 201 was first flown in 1949, no mention was made that to date only three have been built, and only one Halcon 202. Neither aircraft can be described as a success other than the fact they are "home made". The Halcon 202 has been barely able to accomplish its test flights due to faulty Spanish engines. To date the Spanish Air Industry has failed in its efforts to provide suitable power plants for any aircraft except trainers.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Negative.

For the Ambassador:

*Stuart W. Rockwell*

Stuart W. Rockwell  
 First Secretary of Embassy

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